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Some Recently Added Sculptures in the
Provincial Museum, Lucknow

BY

PANDIT HIRANANDA SHASTRI, M.A., M.O.L.



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SOME RECENTLY ADDED SCULPTURES IN THE PROVINCIAL MUSEUM, LUCKNOW.

DURING the last few years when I held charge of the Provincial Museum at Lucknow some valuable additions were made to its archaeological section, and as they have not been noticed before I publish them here in the interests of students of Indian iconography. The acquisitions which I intend to notice are eight images belonging to different cults. Three are Buddhist, two Brahmanical and three Jaina. Of the Buddhist images, two are in gilt copper and the third is in stone. Of the Brahmanical figures one is of sandstone and the other appears to be of gun-metal. Of the Jaina statues one is of brass and two are in black marble. The brass one bears a dated inscription giving the time of its consecration. The two Buddhist figurines in gilt copper also bear inscriptions though nothing more than the well-known creed formula. Excepting the railing pillar, which belongs to the Kushāna period, they are all mediæval. With this foreword I proceed to describe them in detail.

First of all, I take the Buddhist images. The earliest of these is, as is shown by mortices on the sides, a railing pillar in red sandstone (Plate I. Fig. *b*). It is fragmentary and measures 2'8" by 8". Both the obverse and the reverse faces of it are carved. The obverse bears the much damaged figure of a female standing under a tree (which, excepting part of the foliage, is now missing) playing the *Vīṇā* or Indian lyre and possibly representing a daughter of *Māra*. It very much resembles the sculpture in Mr. Dames's collection which has been reproduced by Mr. Vincent Smith in his *History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*¹ and which perhaps, stands for *Māra* himself. The reverse shows three lotus flowers such as we find on other railing pillars. It is said to have come from the Gurgaon District in the Punjab.² The style of it, however, particularly the treatment of the drapery, the heavy ear-rings and anklets, having close resemblance to the well-known railing figures of Mathurā, will show that the place of its origin must have been Mathurā and

¹ Page 117, Fig. 60.

² For other Buddhist sculptures from this District see Vogel, *A.S.R.* 1909-10, page 65.

not Gurgaon. The other figures were dug out, as the Executive Engineer of the Gonda Division of the United Provinces informed me, along with three other remains, namely, a miniature *stūpa* with a square base ($2\frac{5}{8}$ " by $2\frac{5}{8}$ "), a *Vajra* or thunder-bolt,¹ $4\frac{1}{8}$ " long and a broken bell when a small hedge was cut in the compound of Sahēṭ or the site of the ancient *Jétavana*, and were sent to the Museum in the month of March, 1913. They are of one and the same style and consequently contemporary: an inference supported by the type of the characters used in the writing seen at their back. One of the remaining two images represents Tārā and the other Gautama Buddha (Plate II) or perhaps, Akshobhya, one of the five Dhyanī Buddhas of the Mahāyānists. That a *Vajra* was found along with them would indicate that they are of the Mahāyāna School, as is shown also of course, by the very figure of Tārā itself. The image of Tārā is $6\frac{1}{8}$ " high, including the pedestal. It represents the deity seated on a lotus in the oriental fashion, with the right leg hanging down and the foot resting on the pedestal, while the left leg rests on the lotus in the "*sukhāsīna*" pose. The right hand is placed on the right knee with a conical object which appears to be a vase. The left hand is placed in the "*nidrita*" pose and holds a conventional lotus. The deity is wearing jewellery-anklets, girdle, wristlet, armlet, necklace, ear-rings and a three-pointed head-dress. She wears also a *dhoti* and what may be a sash, worn like the sacred thread. Her hair is dressed in long locks which fall on the shoulders. She is shown laughing somewhat wildly. The round piece at the back extending from the lotus seat to a little above the head is evidently meant for the *prabhāmaṇḍala* or nimbus. Except at the border, where it is dentated, it is all plain, the border being formed by a raised line circumscribing the plain surface. It is surmounted by an umbrella pierced by a long stick forked at the upper end and fixed at the centre of the nimbus. The umbrella is decorated with two pendants or festoons hanging one on each side up to the aura. The lotus on which the figure is seated rests on a double rectangular base or pedestal (3 " by $3\frac{1}{2}$ ") which is supported on four legs and is hollow. The inner base measures $2\frac{1}{2}$ " by 2 " and the outer one 3 " by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ". At the back of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* or rather the image, about the middle, is soldered a small circular piece which bears the well-known formula of the Buddhist creed, which Aśvajit addressed to Sāriputra, engraved in low relief in characters of about the 8th or 9th century A.D.

The inscription at the back, that is, the creed formula, the association with the representations of Buddha, the *Stūpa* and the *Vajra*, which were found along with it, will at once lead us to identify the figurine with that of Tārā the well-known Bodhisattva of the Buddhist pantheon, as does the "*utpala*" or blue lotus seen in the left hand, as this is a characteristic emblem of Tārā. As to the special form of Tārā which this image represents, I would remark that the artist does not seem to have been particular about it, for he has not given all the characteristics of any

¹ This specimen is forked at the end as is the case with those from Nepal and Tibet unlike the *Vajra* shown in Gandhāra sculpture which is not forked.

special form. The pose is that of the Śyāma-Tārā or Green Tārā, who is usually represented seated on a lotus-throne with the right leg pendant, but we do not find any lotus supporting the foot which here rests on the pedestal. In this point she will resemble the Khadiravarṇī Tārā which is a form of the yellow Tārā, but differs in the *mudrās* or mystic poses of the hands, the Khadiravarṇī Tārā being shown as similarly seated with her right hand in the 'charity' *mudrā* holding the stem of a full-blown lotus flower, the left hand being in the 'argument' *mudrā* holding the stem of an "utpala." The attribute of the right hand is not unlike the *Kalaśa* or vase, and this will lend additional support to her identification with the yellow Tārā. But we have to remember that this form, namely, the yellow one, holds a vase in one of the left hands, the other holding¹ a trident. But artists do not always follow tradition and are at times erroneous in their distribution of attributes. It is particularly the "utpala" shown in profile with its centre hidden, whose stem is held in the left hand, which tends to identify the figure with that of the Śyāma or Green Tārā, as this is her special symbol. Although the right hand is not in the "Vara"-*mudrā* still it may perhaps be connected with her form as Dhanadā and the vase may be taken to be a *ratnaghata* or vase of jewels.

Though the figure, I believe, is undoubtedly a representation of the Buddhist Tārā, yet because of her resemblance in at least one or two points to the image of the Brahmanical deity of this name, it will not be inappropriate to study her in conjunction with the homonymous goddess of the Hindu pantheon. Nor, I think, will it be out of place to make a few remarks as to her origin. The Hindu or Brahmanical mythology knows of several Tārās. One of them is the wife of Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of the gods, who was carried off by Soma, was afterwards restored to her husband at the intercession of Brahmā, and who gave birth to a son named Budha who through Pururavas became the progenitor of the lunar race of kings. Another Tārā is the wife of Bālī or the mother of Aṅgada. The third Tārā known to the Purāṇas or epics was the wife of Hariśchandra, a king of the solar race famous for his liberality and probity and unflinching adherence to truth. But with these we have no concern at present. To Hemādri, who lived about 1300 A.D., Tārā is known as one of the sixty-four *Yoginīs* or female attendants on Śiva or Durgā. Quoting the *Mayadīpikā*, a work of unknown date, but presumably ancient, in his well-known book, the *Chaturvarggachintāmaṇi*, he describes her as black in colour, seated on an owl, and holding a spear and a club.² *Yoginīs* though supernatural, yet are subservient to other deities and do not hold an independent rank. This Tārā of the *Mayadīpikā* is apparently a new figure not noticed elsewhere. In any case, she is different entirely from the divinity I am talking about. It is the second Mahāvidyā with whom I am chiefly concerned,

¹ A. Getty. *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, page 110.

² Bibl. Ind. edition, Vol. II, page 97.

तारा तारमुं धृञ्जा कौशिक्या मितेरा,
धत्ते शत्रुधर्के सौम्ये प्रलसुद्धरसन्धतः ॥

and who, like other principal deities of the henotheistic cult of the Hindus, reigns supreme in her sphere. She is one of the ten principal goddesses of the *Śāktas*. The ten Mahāvidyās or “Muses” as named in the *Chāmūṇ-ḍātāntra* quoted in the *Śabdakalpadrūma* are these—

काली तारा महाविद्या षोडशी भुवनेश्वरी ।
भैरवी छिन्नमस्ता च विद्या धूमवती तथा ॥
वगला मिडविद्या च मातङ्गी कमलात्मिका ।
एता दश महाविद्याः मिडविद्याः प्रकीर्त्तिताः ॥

namely, (1) Kālī. (2) Tārā. (3) Shodāṣī. (4) Bhuvaneśvarī. (6) Chhinnamastā, (7) Dhūmāvatī. (5) Bhairavī. (8) Vagalā. (9) Mātāṅgī. and (10) Kamalā.

Though Tārā is mentioned second and consequently called *Dvitiyā* or ‘the second,’ yet she is looked upon as unequalled in liberality or granting success and being one who can be invoked¹ or worshipped at any time is easily accessible. This is what we find in the case of the Buddhist Tārā also, for she can be directly appealed to without any intermediary, unlike other deities of the first rank. Ordinarily the Hindu mythology recognises eight Tārās but the principal ones are only three, namely, Ekajaṭā, Nīlasarasvatī, and Ugratārā.² I do not think these are to be treated as distinct divinities. They are rather, as Waddell has remarked with regard to the numerous Tārās of the Buddhist pantheon,³ the concrete objective representations of the modes and titles of one and the same deity, namely, Tārā. Difference in names is due to the various aspects of a god or goddess which a worshipper has in view. The Tārā proper is thus described by Mahīdhara in his *Mantramahōdadhi*—

विश्वव्यापकवार्गमध्यविलम्बकृताम्बुजन्मस्थितां
कर्त्रीखड्गकपालनीलनलिने राजत्करां नीलभाम् ।
काञ्चीकुण्डलहारकङ्कणलम्कयूरमञ्जोरता-
मार्त्तर्नागवरैर्विभूषिततनुमारक्तनेत्रत्रयाम् ॥
पिङ्गोयैकजटां ललत्तमुरशनां दंष्ट्राकरालाननां
चर्म द्वैपि वरं कटौ विदधतीं श्रुतास्थिपट्टालिकाम् ।
अक्षोभ्येण विराजमानशिरसं स्मराननाभोरुहं
तारां शवहृदामनां दृढकुचामम्बां त्रिलोक्याः स्मरेत् ।

‘She sits on a white lotus looking beautiful amidst all-pervading waters. Her colour is blue and she holds a knife (or scissors), a sword, a skull and a blue lotus in her hands. She wears a girdle, ear-rings, necklace, wristlets, armlets and anklets, is decorated with serpents, has three red eyes and a fearsome tawny chignon, her tongue is protruding and her face looks terrible on account of her jaws. Round her waist she wears a tiger’s skin and she holds an axe of white bones. Her head is adorned by Akshobhya. Her lotus-

¹ Mahīdhara in his *Mantramahodadhi*, Chapter IV, Sts. 44 and 122.

² Her name Nīlasarasvatī given in the *Tantrasāra* and accounted for as नीलशवाक्षप्रदायिनी तेन लीलसरस्वती is evidently an instance of *dānastuti* or popular etymology.

³ The cult of Tārā, *Journal Royal Asiatic Society*, 1894, page 65.

like face is smiling. She with prominent breasts sits on the chest of a corpse and is the mother of the triple world.'

The description given in the *Tantrasāra*¹ agrees in the main with this. It represents her in the *prayālīlā* attitude,² i.e., standing in the attitude of shooting, with her left knee advanced and the right retracted, dwarfish in size, with protuberant abdomen and surrounded by a burning funeral pyre, holding *Khadga* (sword), *Kartrī* (scissors), or knife in the right hands, and *Kapāla* (skull) and *Utpala* (blue lotus) in the left hands. But this I think is a difference in detail only. Attributes change according to the aspects of a deity.

The Brahmanical Tārā like the Buddhist Tārā is primarily a 'Saviouress,' and this is in harmony with the etymology of the term.³ According to the *Laghustava*, the well-known eulogy of Durgā read daily by a staunch Śākta or the worshipper of Śaktī, she is to be invoked for the crossing of waters or at the time of distress caused by flood or swelling of waters.'

लक्ष्मीं राजकुले जयां रणभुवि क्षेमङ्करीमध्वनि
क्रव्याद्विषसर्पभाजि श्वरीं कान्तारदुर्गे गिरी ।
भूतप्रेतपिशाचराक्षसभये स्मृत्वा महाभैरवीं
व्यामीहे त्रिपुरां तरन्ति विपदस्तरां च तोययन्ति ॥

"Having thought of Lakshmī at the royal courts, Jayā in the battle-field, Kṣhemaṅkarī during a journey, Śavarī in inaccessible forests abounding in serpents, elephants, and carnivorous animals, Mahābhairavī at the time of fear due to ghosts, spirits, goblins, and demons, Tripurā during embarrassment, people cross or overcome their troubles thinking of Tārā during floods or the swelling of waters."

This would rather go to connect her with navigation—she is a deity who ensures safe crossing of waters. The very conception of her form as seated on a lotus emerging from all-pervading water, or the ocean, seems to favour this idea. She can save her votaries from the flooded waters or the sea, she can save them from the *bharasāgara*, the Ocean of Existence. She will be what a boat is to a person who has to cross a river, a comparison found in the verse of Jātavedas in the Rīgveda, so very closely connected with the cult of Durgā. Durgā is the chief goddess in the Brahmanical pantheon, and other goddesses are her '*Vibhūti*' or the manifestation of her power. This is what we find from the *Durgāsaptasatī* or *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* of which it forms a part. While addressing the demon-king Śumbha, Durgā says:—

पश्येता दुष्ट मध्येव विशन्त्यो मद्भिभूतयः ।

¹ See *Sādhakalpadrūpa* under Tārā.

² Cf. Tārāstaka published in the *Bṛhatstotratratnākara* (Bombay, Nirṇayasāgara Press) Verse I, प्रत्यालीदपद-स्थिते, etc.

³ Tārā from the root *tr.* to cross or swim over.

जातवेदसं मुनयाम सोममरातीयती निदधाति वेदः ।

स नः पर्यदतिदुर्गाणि विद्या नावेव सिन्धुं दूरितायग्निः ।

Rigveda ; I 99-1.

This verse though originally dedicated to Jātavedas is used for *anṅanyāsa* or the mystic touching of the limbs before the *Durgāsaptasatī* is read.

“ See, villain ! these manifestations of my power submerge in me.”

In a hymn of the Mahābhārata Durgā the well-known Hindu goddess is praised under the epithet of Tārīṇī and as Tārā and Tārīṇī are apparently identical names one is tempted to ask if Tārā was really in view of the composer of the hymn. This being an interesting reference to Tārīṇī as a goddess, perhaps, the earliest known in Brahmanical literature, it will not be out of place to quote in full the whole text of the hymn where it occurs, i.e., the hymn uttered by Arjuna at the instance of Kṛishṇa in praise of Durgā to attain victory over his formidable foes :

अर्जुन उवाच—

नमस्ते मिद्धमेनानि आर्ये मन्दरवामिनि ।
 कुमारि कालि कापालि कपिलि कृष्णपिङ्गले ॥
 भद्रकालि नमस्तुभ्यं महाकालि नमोस्तु ते ।
 चाङ्गुल चण्डे नमस्तुभ्यं तारिणि वरवर्णिनि ॥
 कात्यायनि महाभागे करालि विजये जये ।
 शिखिपिच्छध्वजधरे नानाभरणभूषिते ॥
 अट्टशूलप्रहरणे खड्गखेटकधारिणि ।
 गोपिन्द्रस्यानुजे ज्येष्ठे नन्दगोपकुलोद्भवे ॥
 मङ्गिषामृक्प्रिये नित्यं कौशिकि पीतवासिनि ।
 अट्टहासे कोकमुखे नमस्तेऽस्तु रणप्रिये ॥
 उम शकम्भरि ज्वाले कृष्णे कैटभनाशिनि ।
 हिरण्याक्षि विरूपाक्षि धूम्राक्षि च नमोऽस्तुते ॥
 वेदश्रुति महापुण्ये ब्रह्मण्ये जातवेदसि ।
 जम्बूकटकचैत्येषु नित्यं सन्निहितालये ॥
 त्वं ब्रह्मविद्या विद्यानां महानिद्रा च देहिनाम् ।
 स्कन्दमातर्भगवति दुर्गे कान्तारवामिनि ॥
 स्वाहाकारः स्वधा चैव कला काष्ठा मरस्वती ।
 सावित्री वेदमाता च तथा वेदान्त उच्यते ॥
 स्तुतामि त्वं महादेवि विशुद्धेनान्तरात्मना ।
 जयो भवतु मे नित्यं त्वत्प्रसादादृणाजिरे ॥
 कान्तारभयदुर्गेषु भक्तानां पालनेषु च ।
 नित्यं वससि पाताले युद्धे जयामि दानवान् ॥
 त्वं जम्भनो मोहिनी च माया क्रीः श्रोतृथेव च ।
 सन्ध्या प्रभावती चैव सावित्री जननी तथा ॥
 तुष्टिः पुष्टिर्धृतिर्दोषिष्वन्द्रादित्यविवर्धनी ।
 भूतिभूतिमतां संख्ये वोच्यसे मिद्धचारणेः ॥

The following translation follows Muir in the main :—

Arjuna says :—Reverence to thee, Siddhasenānī (Generaless of the Siddhas), the noble, the dweller on the Mandara mountain, Kumārī (maiden), Kālī,

Kapilā (tawny). Krishṇapiṅgalā (dark and brown). Reverence to thee, Bhadrakālī: reverence to thee. Mahākālī: reverence to thee. Chaṇḍī. Chandā: reverence to thee. O Tārīṇī, (deliveress) O Varavarīṇī (beautiful-coloured), O fortunate Kātyāyanī, O Karālī. O Vijayā, O Jayā, who bearest a peacock's tail for thy banner, adorned with various jewels, armed with many spears, wielding sword and shield, younger sister of the chief of cowherds (Kṛishṇa), eldest born in the family of the cowherd Nanda, delighting always in Mahi-sha's blood, Kauśikī, wearing yellow garments, loud-laughing, wolf-mouthed; reverence to thee, thou delighter in battle. O Umā Śākambharī, thou white one (or Śvetā), thou black one (or Kṛishṇā). O destroyer of Kaiṭabha. Reverence to thee O Hiranyākshī (golden-eyed), distorted or three-eyed and dark-eyed one, O Vedaśruti (tradition of the Veda), most pure, devout, Jātavedasī (female Agni) who dwellest continually near to [the ridge of] mountain precipices and sepulchres, of sciences thou art the science of Brahma, the great sleep of embodied beings, O mother of Skanda, divine Durgā, dweller in wildernesses. Thou art called Svāhā, Svadhā, Kalā, Kāshṭhā (minute divisions of time) Sarasvatī, Sāvitrī, mother of the Vedas, and the Vedānta. Thou, great goddess, art praised with a pure heart. By thy favour let me be ever victorious in battle. Thou dwellest in the wilderness in fearful and difficult places, (for the) protection of thy worshippers. In nether regions thou constantly abidest and ever conquerest demons in battle. Thou art Jambhānī, Mohinī, Māyā, Hṛī, Śrī, the luminous Sandhyā (twilight) Sāvitrī, the mother Tusṭī (contentment), strength, constancy, light, increaser of the sun and moon, the power of the powerful in battle—(all this) thou art seen by the Siddhas and the Chāraṇas (to be).¹

This is only a *stotra* of Durgā, no doubt, but the mention of Tārīṇī or the deliveress of beautiful colours is quite significant particularly when this hymn is read together with the *stuti* or praise of the goddess by Yudhiṣṭhira, the chief of the five Pāṇḍavas. Whether Tārā, as conceived by the Tāntrikas later on, was known or not at the time when this hymn was composed we have no means of ascertaining. But the hymn at any rate goes to indicate that Brahmanical mythology knew of a goddess whose aid was sought for deliverance from troubles and who was conceived to be a noble maiden of a beautiful black, tawny and white colour, with three (or distorted) eyes, and the mother of all sciences about the beginning of the Christian era. To determine the date of the Mahābhārata or its parts is a difficult problem still awaiting final solution, so I am not in a position to say at what definite time the above-quoted eulogy was composed. Still I think it will not be far from accurate to ascribe it to the early centuries of the Christian era. In any case, this much seems to be certain that the form of Tārā as conceived by the latter Tāntrikas is not altogether a new idea. But as the traits we find in the *stotras* by Yudhiṣṭhira² or Arjuna³ are common to

¹ Muir, *Sanskrit Texts* Vol. IV, page 432-3.

² *Mahābhārata*, Virāṭaparvan Chap. 6.

³ *Bhīṣmaparvan*, Chap. 23.

all goddesses as well as gods much stress, I am afraid, cannot be laid on these references.

In the cult of the Brahmanical Tārā we find that Akshobhya is the chief person. He is the seer of her *mantra* and is to be worshipped as such on the head of the goddess.¹ There are, besides Akshobhya, a few seers also whom a votary of Tārā has to adore, namely, Vairochana, Amitābha, Padmanābha, Śaṅkha, Pāṇḍura, etc. These he will worship at different parts of the mystic diagram or spell of the goddess.² Of these Amitābha and Vairochana, at least, are to be found in Buddhist mythology as well. Buddhists, or rather the Mahāyānists, we know, recognise five Dhyaṇi Buddhas, namely, (1) Vairochana, (2) Akshobhya, (3) Ratnasambhava,³ (4) Amitābha, (5) Amoghasiddha; and their Śaktis to the same number, to wit, (1) Vajradhātviśvarī, (2) Pāṇḍarā, (3) Tārā, (4) Māmakī, and (5) Lochanā.

This conception of Tārā in the Hindu mythology will at once strike a student of the Buddhist pantheon as not very dissimilar to that of the Śakti or female energy of Avalokiteśvara, the reflex or spiritual son of Amitābha and the most popular divinity in the Mahāyāna school of thought, whose worship extends not only from Nepāl to Tibet but northward to lake Baikal and from the Caucasus eastward to Japan. In the Buddhist mythology, as I have already said, Tārā is conceived to be a saviouress or deliveress, *i.e.*, one who helps man to cross the Ocean of Existence. Her *dhāraṇī* or the manual of worship giving her praises and spells is believed to have been written by the Dhyāni-Buddha Vairochana. The legend regarding her origin which is generally accepted is that a tear fell from the eye of the All-pitying One, *i.e.*, Avalokiteśvara, and falling in the valley beneath, formed a lake from whose waters arose a lotus flower, which, opening its petals, disclosed the pure goddess Tārā.⁴ Though there are several Tārās, yet, I think, according to the colour she adopts, Tārā may be thought of as five-fold, namely, the white, the blue, the green, the yellow, and the red Tārā. These are the five sacred colours. Ordinarily she is green, but is seen red like the sun, blue like sapphire, white like the milky sea, or yellow like gold. In some of the representations known to us endeavour has been made to show all these colours simultaneously. Like other deities she too has a double aspect, the angry and the pacific one. Her angry forms are represented in three colours, red, yellow and blue, but her pacific form will be coloured white or green. In her pacific mode she is seated wearing the *Bodhisatva* ornaments, including the five-leaved crown and having long and wavy hair as well as a smiling expression. The angry aspects have dishevelled hair. Tāntric attributes and ornaments and a third eye.

¹ *Mantramahodādhī*, IV, 93.

² *Loc. cit.* *Skt.* 94-95.

³ This Dhyāni Buddha has a yellow colour and may be identical with the Pāṇḍura who is connected with the Brahmanical Tārā.

Pāṇḍarā is the Śakti or energy of Amitābha but it reminds one of Pāṇḍura the seer connected with the cult of the Brahmanical Tārā.

⁴ A. Getty *The Gods*, etc., page 105.

Taking all her various forms together, the Buddhist Tārā shows all the traits of the Brahmanical Tārā.

The comparison thus shows that the Brahmanical Tārā rather resembles the angry form of the Buddhist divinity of that designation. The description of the goddess given above in accordance with the Brahmanical texts agrees in many respects with that of blue Tārā or Ekajaṭā. Both are blue, step to the right, stand on a corpse, have three eyes, laugh horribly, have prominent teeth and protruding tongue. Their eyes are red and thin hips covered by a tiger skin. Both have garlands of heads and ornaments of snakes. The four-armed Tārā in Buddhist mythology also has the same attributes or symbols which her Brahmanical sister has, namely, sword, knife, blue lotus and skull-cup. Beside these we find that the figure of Akṣobhya in the head-dress is also common, for we know that a small image of this Dhyaṇi Buddha is often to be seen in the head-dress of Tārā as is noticed in that of Mañjuśrī Yamāntaka, and Prajñāpāramitā. The fact that Akṣobhya figures in the head of other divinities should cause no astonishment. For the nearer we approach to Tāntric practices, the more difficult it becomes to differentiate the divinities. Owing to this circumstance M. Foucher in his *Iconographie bouddhique* had to remark that in the *Stotras* and *Dhāraṇīs* the hymns of Tāra are found hopelessly mixed with those of Mārīchi and others, and the personalities of the deities in these litanies are so vague that one is tempted to ask if the names really represent distinct deities.

This brief analysis, I think, shows that the Brahmanical Tārā is very much like the Buddhist goddess of that name. The one difference we notice is that in Buddhist mythology she is ranked as a Bodhisattva, though at times she is called the mother of the Buddhas. The question which now presents itself for solution is whether Tārā was originally a Brahmanical or a Buddhist deity. That she is a Bodhisattva could go to indicate that she might have been Brahmanical originally. For it does not appear unlikely that the Buddhists or Mahāyānists enrolled her as a Bodhisattva and gave her a position which was slightly inferior to that of a Buddha. This they did in several other instances.¹ The incorporation of Hindu deities into the Buddhist pantheon is an admitted fact. When turned into a Bodhisattva the Brahmanical deity was no doubt placed below Buddha, but the Hindu votary while coming over to Buddhism would remember that a Bodhisattva is destined to become a Buddha in some future *Kalpa* and he is not very likely to feel this lowering of the position of his deity especially when he knows fully well that every person by virtue of his merit can rise to the rank of a god. On the other hand that would open for him a career which had been apportioned to his deity. By the dint of his energy or virtue he himself could attain to a similar position. This bringing in of Brahmanical gods was not resented for it still allowed the pious convert to continue his adoration of his favourite divinity or *isṭadēva*. The association of Tārā with Avalokiteśvara will hardly tend

¹ For example, Śiva became Avalokiteśvara of the Mahāyānists.

to counteract this idea, for in Avalokiteśvara we can recognise Śiva, the well-known Brahmanical deity. But the data now available do not favour this view. They would show with a considerable amount of certainty that the conception of Tārā must have been Buddhist originally. What leads me to such a surmise is this. According to the Hindu Tantra works Tārā appears to be more Buddhist than Brahmanical for the one reason that Akshobhya is placed on her head and has thus been given a higher position than that of the divinity. That ¹Akshobhya is a Buddha is too well-known to require demonstration, but I am not aware that he figures at all as a distinct personality elsewhere in Brahmanical mythology. To make him a *rishi* or seer of her *mantra* is an attempt towards Brahmanisation of the cult, apparently. Otherwise, the elevation of a 'seer' (a mortal after all) to such an exalted position is hardly explicable. The very position in the head-dress is a Buddhist feature.

Though the appearance of Akshobhya is in itself a strong argument in favour of Tārā's Buddhist origin, yet I think further support is required. This is supplied by an old *tantra* work, named *Āchāratāntra* whose manuscript copy dated in the Vikrama year 1854 (A.D. 1797) I had occasion to see in the State Library at Jammu. This work records a legend which will elucidate the point. It says that Vasishṭha, the well-known *rishi*, failed to propitiate Tārā by means of the Brahmanical modes of worship and, when on the verge of disappointment, was asked by her through *Ākāśavāṇī* (i.e., incorporeal voice), to go to Buddha (lit. Viṣṇu in the form of Bodha) and worship her in accordance with the *āchāra* or system as taught by him. While addressing the seer, Tārā, without manifesting herself, thus spoke to him:—

मदीयाराधनाचारं बौद्धरूपो जनादर्नः ।
 एक एव विजानाति नान्यः कश्चन तत्त्वतः ॥
 वृथैवाक्लेशबहुना कालोऽयं गमितस्त्वया ।
 विरुद्धाचारशीलेन मम तत्त्वमजानता ॥
 तद्बोधरूपिणो विष्णोः मन्निधिं याहि संप्रति ।
 तेनोपदिष्टाचारेण मामाराधय सुव्रत ॥
 तदैवाशु प्रसन्ना स्यां त्वयि वत्स न संशयः ।

Translation :—

The real way to worship me is known to Viṣṇu in the form of Buddha and to nobody else. In vain you have spent so much time and undergone

¹ This name of Akshobhya occurs in the thousand epithets of Viṣṇu and is merely an attribute for it does not represent any particular form of that god. The only other instance I know of where the term is used though in the feminine gender as a proper noun is in the *Mayaṭīpikā* quoted by Hemādri in his *Chaturvargga chintāmaṇi* where it occurs as the name of one of the sixty-four *Yoginīs* or female attendants of Durgā. Even in this case the personality spoken of is so vague that one can reasonably doubt if the name really represents any distinct divinity.

² Last three verses of its first *Patāla* or Chapter.

troubles not knowing my real nature and following the wrong course or practices. Go, therefore, unto Viṣṇu who has assumed the form of Bodha (Enlightenment)¹ at once and worship me in accordance with the way (*āchāra*) he will teach you who are of good vows and conduct. Then only I shall be pleased with you immediately, O dear one, there is no doubt.

The legend continues to say that the sage went to China (*mahāchīna*) and learned from Buddha himself how to worship Tārā. It also gives various details but we have no concern with them at present.

To say that the real nature of Tārā was known to Buddha and that she could be propitiated by means of the Chinese way of her worship suffices, in my opinion, to show her Buddhist origin. I think the bearing of the legend on this question is quite clear, and on the strength of it one can safely surmise that Tārā was originally Buddhist divinity.

The earliest mention of the goddess in an epigraphical document known to me is perhaps in the Chālukyan inscription of the time of Tribhuvanamalla or Vikramāditya VI, whose reign began in the Śaka year 1017 (A.D. 1095-6). Here, too, she is evidently Buddhist and not Brahmanical. So she is in the inscription from Śrāvastī which is dated in the Vikrama year 1276 (A.D. 1219).

In this connection I may remark that her association with Avalokiteśvara rather lends an additional support to this view. The cult of this Bodhisattva is fairly old and was known in the early centuries of the Christian era as would appear from a railing figure preserved in the Lucknow Museum which I think bears the representation of Avalokiteśvara with Amitābha, his spiritual father, in the head-dress. Whether he was conceived along with his Śaktī, namely, Tārā so early we are not sure² nor can we say for certain at what time Tārā was first introduced into the Brahmanical pantheon. About the 8th century we know she was a very favourite deity³ not only of the Buddhists but of the Hindus also as I have already said because of her easy accessibility. She could be invoked without the intercession of any priest and at any time, like Avalokiteśvara, the All-compassionate. She has been the deliveress *ever and anon*. She was largely worshipped by the Buddhists when Hiuan Tsiang visited India. Between the 8th and 12th centuries she became very popular, and as Miss Getty tells us,¹ many temples and colleges were dedicated to her and there was hardly a household without a statue of Tārā.

The next figure in the lot which requires notice is very much like the foregoing one in style and is evidently of the same age. It measures 3" by 2½" by 5½" and represents Buddha (Plate II) seated cross-legged in the *bhūmiśparśamudrā* or the earth-touching attitude and in the Vajrāsana or 'adamantine' posture in which the Buddha sat at the time of the Bodhi or Enlightenment, with an indomitable resolution not to get up till he had

¹ Cf. A. Getty, *The Gods*, etc., page 54.

² Beals, *Buddhistic records*, etc., Vol. II, pages 103 and 174.

³ Gods, etc., page 105.

reached the goal and attained to the highest wisdom as Aśvaghosha has expressed it :—

भिनञ्चि तावद्भुवि नैतदासनं
न यामि यावत्कृतकृत्यतामिति ॥

The *prabhāmaṇḍala* or nimbus is here cut from within round the upper part of the figure. A small circular piece is soldered at the back bearing, as in the figurine of Tārā, the Buddhist creed in the Nāgarī character of about the 9th century A.D.

The leaves of the pipal or *Ficus religiosa* shown above the head of the figure defines the statuette as an image of Gautama or the historical Buddha. Different Buddhas we know have different *bodhi* trees. For instance, the *nyagrodha* or banyan tree (*Ficus indica*) was the *bodhi* tree of Kāśyapa, the *udumbara* (*Ficus glomerata*) is that of Kanaka Muni, the *Sāla* or *Shorea robusta* of Viśvabhū, the *Pāṭali* (*Bignonia Suaveolens*) of Vipāśvi, and the *Siriśa* (*acacia Siriśa*) of Krakuchhanda. Similarly the historical Buddha is said to have the *pīpal* as his *bodhi* tree. The Hīnayānists will look upon this figurine as a representation of Gautama Buddha who sat under the *pīpal* tree in the *Vajrāsana* posture at the time of the Enlightenment. They worship him under this form in Ceylon, Java, Burma and Siam. But the Mahāyānists will take it to be an image of Akshobhya who is likewise represented seated cross-legged with the left hand lying on the lap and the right hand touching the earth with the tips of the outstretched fingers, the palm turned inwards, in the same pose in which Gautama Buddha sat invoking the Earth to bear witness that he had resisted the temptation of Māra. The followers of the Great Vehicle, we are told, appeal to the Buddha in his etherial form of Amī-tābha. As the collection to which this figurine belongs is of the Mahāyānist cult, I should rather like to call it Akshobhya, although I think the name must have been an attribute originally signifying the indomitable will of the Lion of the Śākyas.

Both these statuettes are in a fair state of preservation. The image of Tārā is slightly damaged at the right hand finger tips. Both are well executed and show considerable regard to realism.

The two Brahmanical images may now be noticed. One of these represents Ādi-Varāha or the primeval Boar who was the third incarnation of Viṣṇu (Plate III). It is a colossal statue in sandstone, measuring 4' 4½" long and 3' 11" high, and came from a locality called *Bani-e-ki barāt*, lying about half a mile to the west of Dudhai, a Sub-Post Office and a Police Station in the Lalitpur subdivision of the Jhansi District in 24° 25'N. and 78° 23'E. Cunningham¹ noticed it in 1880 along with countless pieces lying scattered over the place. A drawing of it was published by Babu P. C. Mukerjee in 1899 in his account of the antiquities of Lalitpur. In 1910-11 it was exhibited at Allahabad at the time of the Exhibition. I secured it for the Lucknow Museum in 1913 through

¹ See his account of remains at Dudhai A.S.R. Vol. X, page 90.

the kind offices of Mr. F. O. Oertel and Mr. C. A. S. Silberrad, I.C.S. It is slightly damaged in transit at one or two places where the stone has chipped off. But on the whole, the sculpture is fairly well preserved.

The Varāha is represented standing with the right leg advanced as in walking. Underneath he has a Nāga figure with seven hoods over the head (five of these are, however, broken) and a long coiled tail and folded hands in adoration. A female figure stands to the left of the Nāga holding a *chourrie* or fly-whisk in the right hand, while her left hand (which is at present damaged) was placed below the mouth of the deity. The image is profusely carved. The portion which is exposed to sight is cut into figurines of many sorts representing various divinities of the Hindu pantheon, including the different incarnations of Viṣṇu, and his door-keepers. These figurines are engraved and arranged in five elliptical rows or panels going round the body of the Varāha and starting from the neck where a serpentine coil is formed. The portion meant for the backbone is decorated with lotus flowers. In front of the snout we see a damaged figure of a female which possibly stands for Sarasvatī with her Vīṇā or lyre. On the two tusks, one on each side, we see a figurine, possibly Pṛithivī. Each of the ears has a small image of a female engraved on it.

The Ādi-Varāha or Bhūvarāha whom our figure represents is shown either as man-boar (*nṛvarāha*), i.e., with the face of a boar in association with the body of a man, or wholly as a boar like the figure under notice. According to the *Vaikhānasāgama* quoted by Gopi Nath Rao,¹ the Nāga shown underneath would be Śeṣha or Ādiśeṣha and the figure of the female standing to the right will be Pṛithivī or the Earth-goddess, as this corresponds to the *āgamas*. Though the attitude is not of the Añjali, i.e., she is not shown प्राञ्जलिकृतहस्ता as 'having her hands folded' yet her touching the muzzle is very characteristic. So also her face, which is expressive of shyness and joy, and the height, for we are told that the image of Bhūmidevī should be as high as the chest of the Varāha.

Though the carving is not so fine as that of the similar image at Eran which has been reproduced by Dr. Kumarasvami,² yet it can serve as a good illustration of mediæval sculpture. It bears no date but as it closely resembles another figure of this kind which is still standing *in situ* at Chāndpur, half way between Dudhai and Deogarh, and bears an inscription dated in *Samvat* 1207 (A.D. 1150), it must be relegated to the same period, viz., the 12th century A.D. Possibly the worship of Varāha was very popular then as several of his representations belong to that period. The same was perhaps, the case during the early mediæval age, as we can infer from the fact that Bhoja, the powerful monarch of Upper India, in the 9th century, assumed the *biruda* or title of Ādi-Varāha or 'Primeval Boar' and issued coins bearing the figure of the boar incarnation of Viṣṇu which we find in abundance in Northern India.

¹ *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part I, page 132, Loc. Cit.

² *Viśvakarma*, Plate 93, XCIII.

The next image to be described is that of Śiva, and is made of bronze (Plate IV). It measures 1' by 8" by 7½" and is in an excellent state of preservation. The place of its origin is not known, but I bought it for the Museum from a dealer in brass-ware at Benares who got it from a Nepalese. It represents Śiva sitting on a lotus with his right leg extended downwards having below the knee a small bell tied as is generally found in the Śaivite images of Southern India. The left leg is bent in the *oriental* fashion, and the god is sitting in the *Sukhāsīna* attitude. He has four arms. The right upper hand holds a *ṭanka* or axe between the fore-fingers and the middle finger the remaining fingers being turned to the palm and thus making a pose of the hand which is called *tripatākahastā*, i.e., the hand with three banners. The right lower hand is lifted up in the *abhaya-mudrā* or attitude of imparting security. The left upper hand holds a deer by the legs between the fore-finger and the middle finger, the remaining fingers being turned like those of the right upper hand in the *tripatākā* pose. The left lower hand is extended downwards in the *varamudrā* or gift-bestowing attitude. The god is wearing several ornaments such as wristlet, necklace, anklet, etc., and a broad waist band. He has a *dhoti* and to both of his ears festoons are tied in a conventional way. From the waist to the knees there is an ornamental projection which is probably a conventional treatment of the drapery. The head-dress of the deity is characteristic of South Indian workmanship. It has a *Karaṇḍa-mukuta* which one would rather expect in the images of female deities. The representations of Śiva are ornamented with *Jaṭāmukuta*. The style of the figure, the head-dress, the small bell on the right leg, the waist band or *Katibandha*, and the pose of the hands, are all South Indian, and I can confidently surmise that the figure came originally from the South. It is not dated but apparently belongs to the late mediæval period.

Out of the additions made to the Jaina Section during my three years in Lucknow I want to notice very briefly only three figures. Two of them are in *alabaster* or *black* marble and the third is brass. The former I secured at Chhatarpur in Bundelkhand. One of them represents Suvidhinātha (Plate I, Fig. *a*) and the other Neminātha (Plate I, Fig. *c*), two patriarchs in the Jaina hierarchy, who are shown standing nude and flanked by *chourie* bearers. The respective symbols or *lañchhanas* of these Tīrthaṅkaras, namely, the crab and the conch shell, are shown on the pedestals which bear also short votive inscriptions written in the Sanskrit language and the Devanāgarī script. According to these records these images were consecrated in the (Vikrama) year 1208 (A.D. 1151) on Thursday the 5th day of the bright half of Āshāḍha. They furnish good examples of the mediæval Jaina sculpture of Upper India and as such are published here.

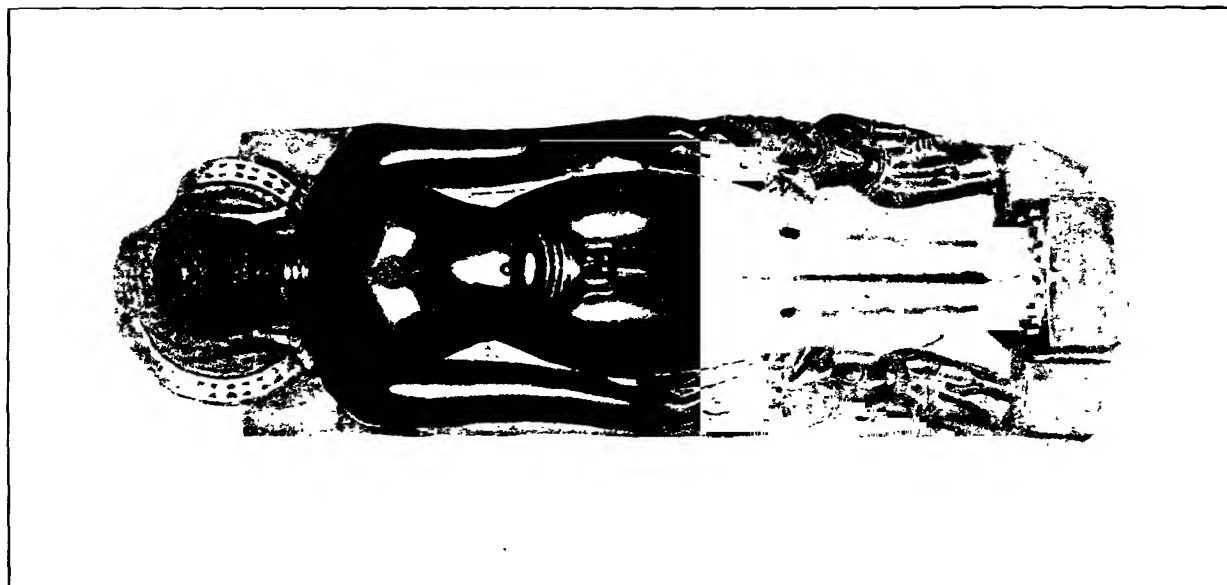
The third and the last figure requiring mention is a brass statuette which was secured at Hardwar in 1914 (Plate V). It represents Rishabhanātha, the first Tīrthaṅkara or pontiff of the Jaina pantheon, who is sitting cross-legged in meditation on a lotus resting on two lions, in the midst of the remaining twenty-three Jinas, thirteen of whom are shown seated in the *dhyāna-*

mudrā, while ten stand in the usual posture, nude and with their hands placed on the thighs, palms inwards. The two standing figurines, one on each side of the lion-throne, are possibly the accompanying *Yaksha* and *Yakshi*, namely, Gomukha and Chakreśvarī; and those sitting at the outer corners of the pedestal with hands folded in adoration, are evidently meant for the donors. To the right we see a serpent. Above the cognisance, which in this case is the bull, there is a standing figurine with lotus in the right hand. Below the symbol there is a row of small seated figurines which perhaps stand for the planets with Sūrya to the left (*i.e.*, the proper right) side of the image. Below this row there is another figure standing in the centre whose nature is not apparent. The *Jina* is sitting flanked by two standing figures under a *chhatra* or umbrella on the sides of which a celestial being holding festoons and an elephant with a rider are shown together with a *deva* in flight above the pinnacle or top of the umbrella. The figurines of the *Jinas*, the conventional elephants, *makaras* and lions or leogryphs on the outermost row are all nicely arranged and the composition gives a pleasing effect. The relief forms a little temple with the *Jina* sitting inside and having a domical spire surmounted by an *amalaka*. The whole piece rests on six legs, three on each side. At the back of the pedestal a short votive inscription of three lines is cut. Its language is Sanskrit and the script Devanāgarī. According to this record *Samvat* 1216 (A.D. 1159) *Āshāḍha* 9, is the date when the statuette was consecrated. Though entire, it is unfortunately much defaced on account of the sandal-paste which was daily rubbed over it, for it was, when purchased, being worshipped as a Brahmanical deity on the *Harkipaiḍi* at Hardwār which is one of the most sacred spots of the Hindus. Still it is a good specimen of the Jaina art of the twelfth century A.D.

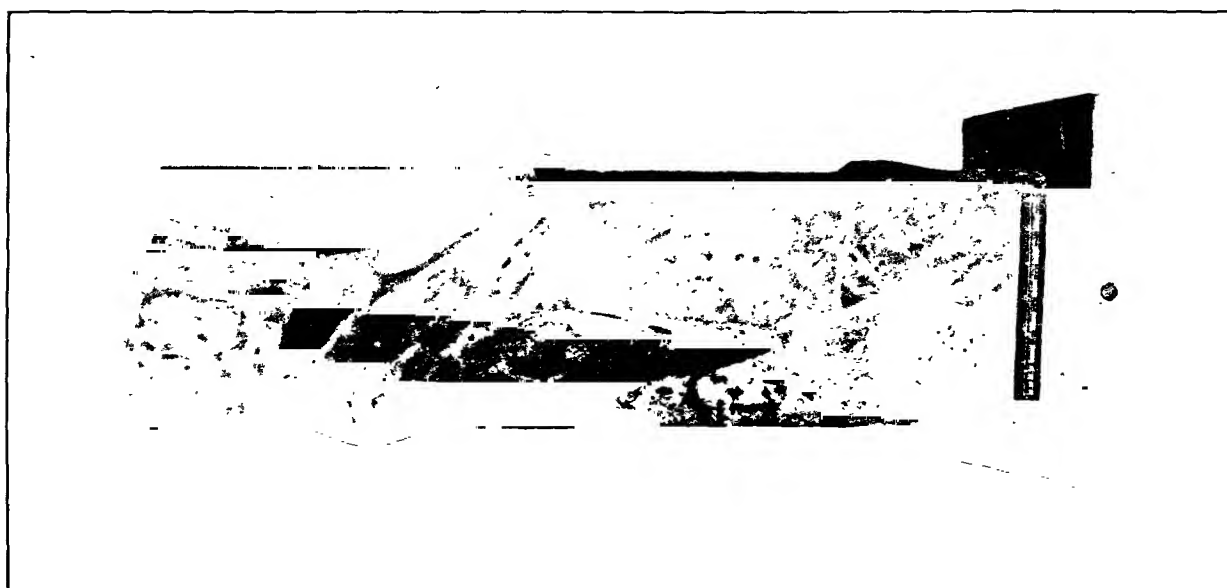
HIRANANDA SHASTRI.

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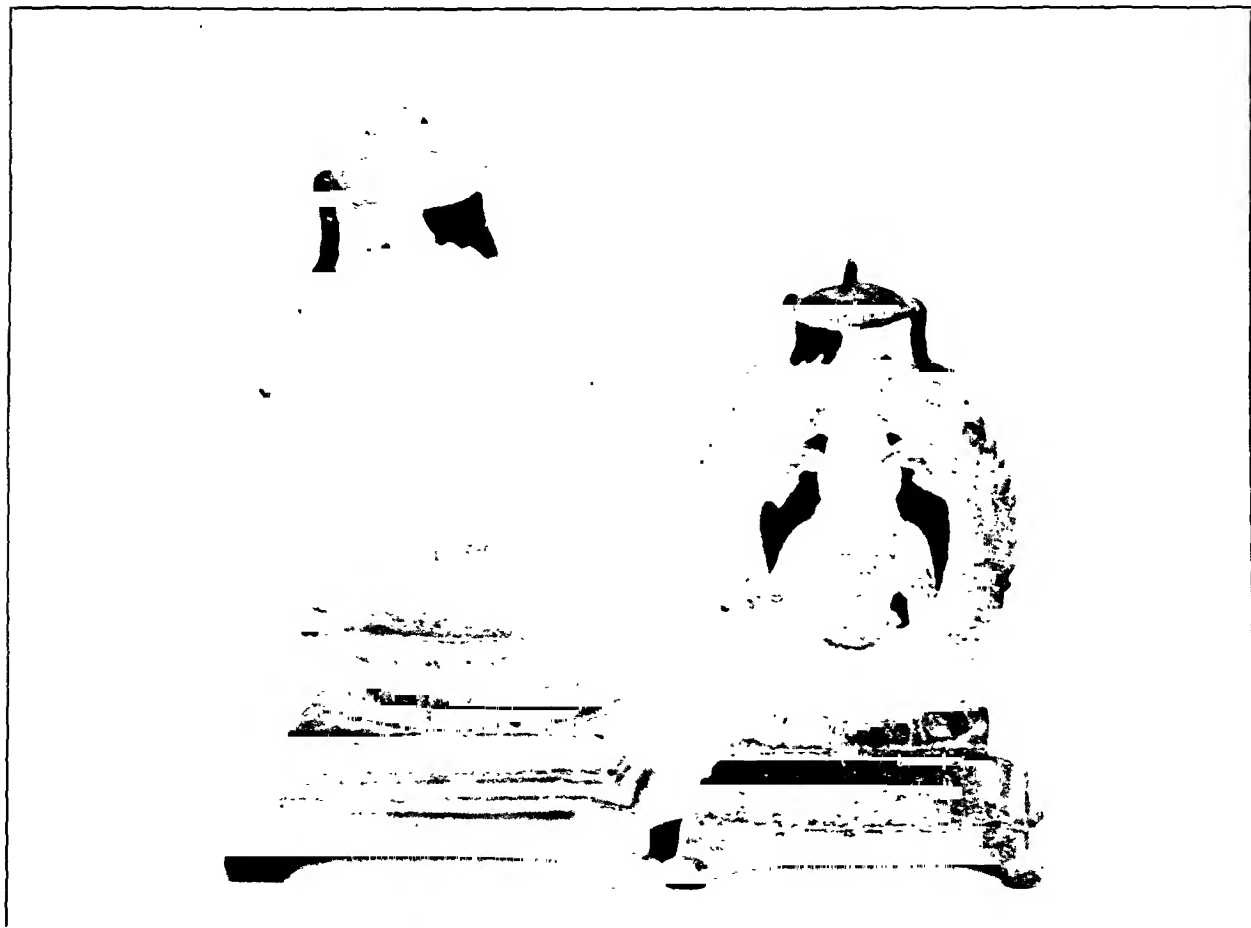
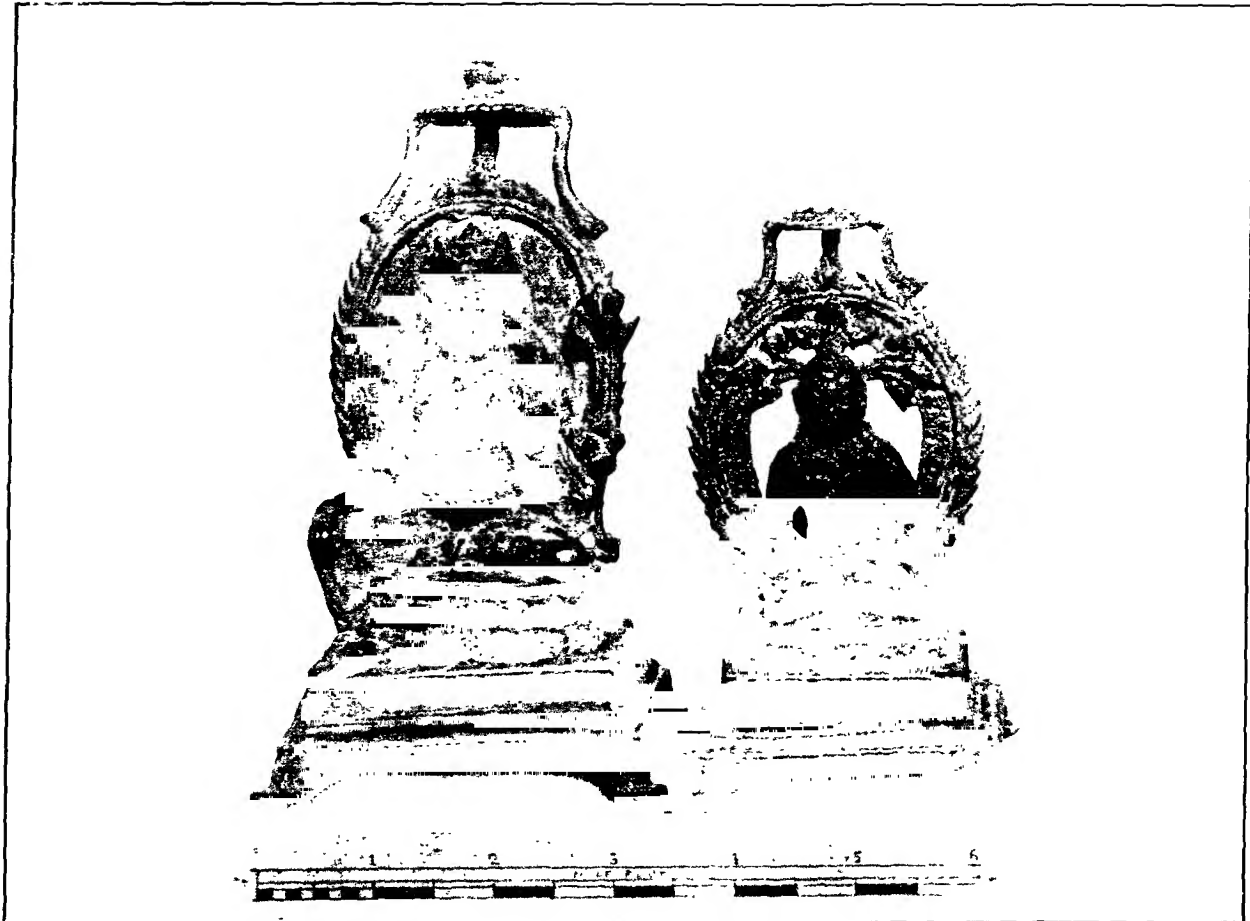
c. STONE IMAGE OF NEMINĀTHA FROM CHIVARPUR,
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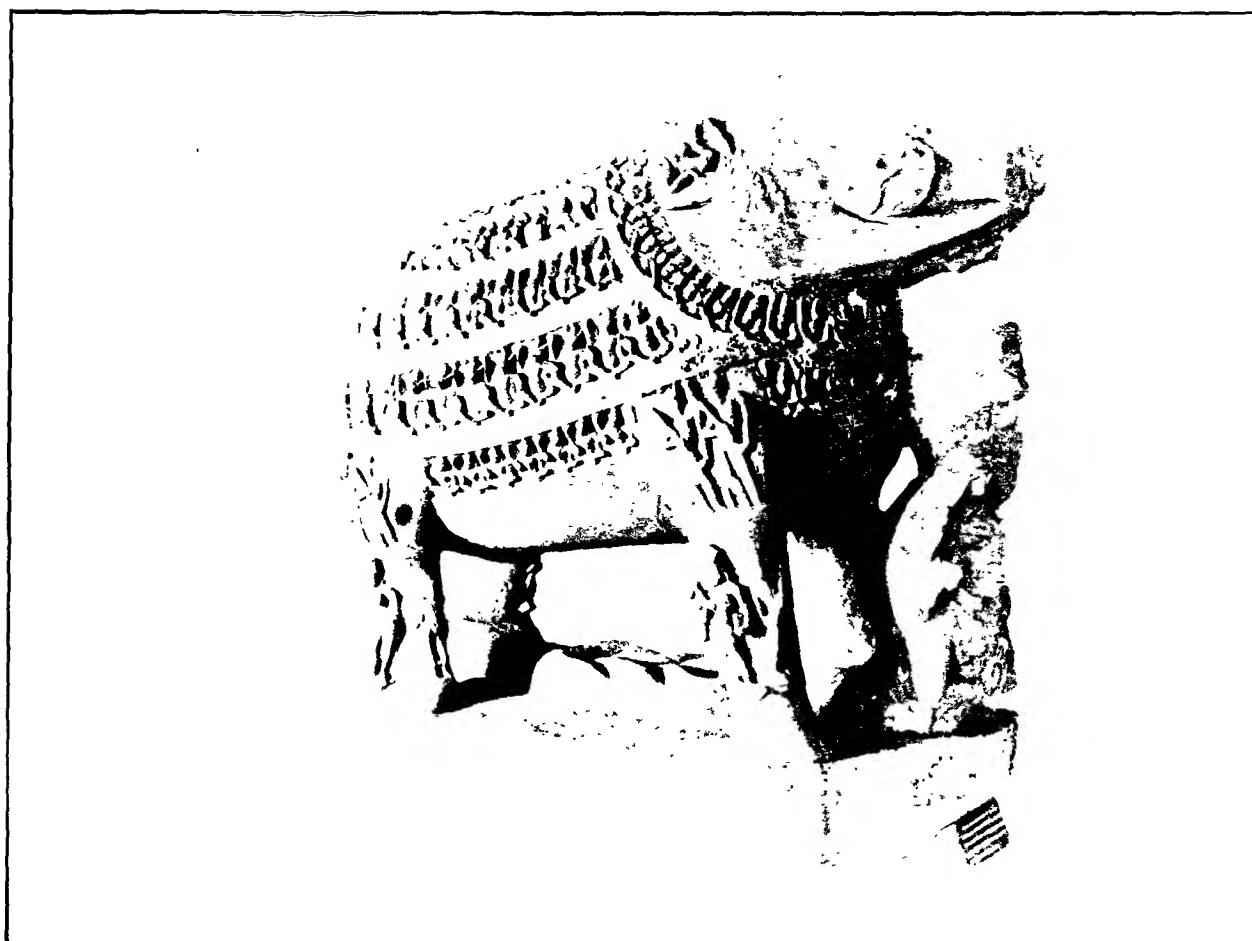
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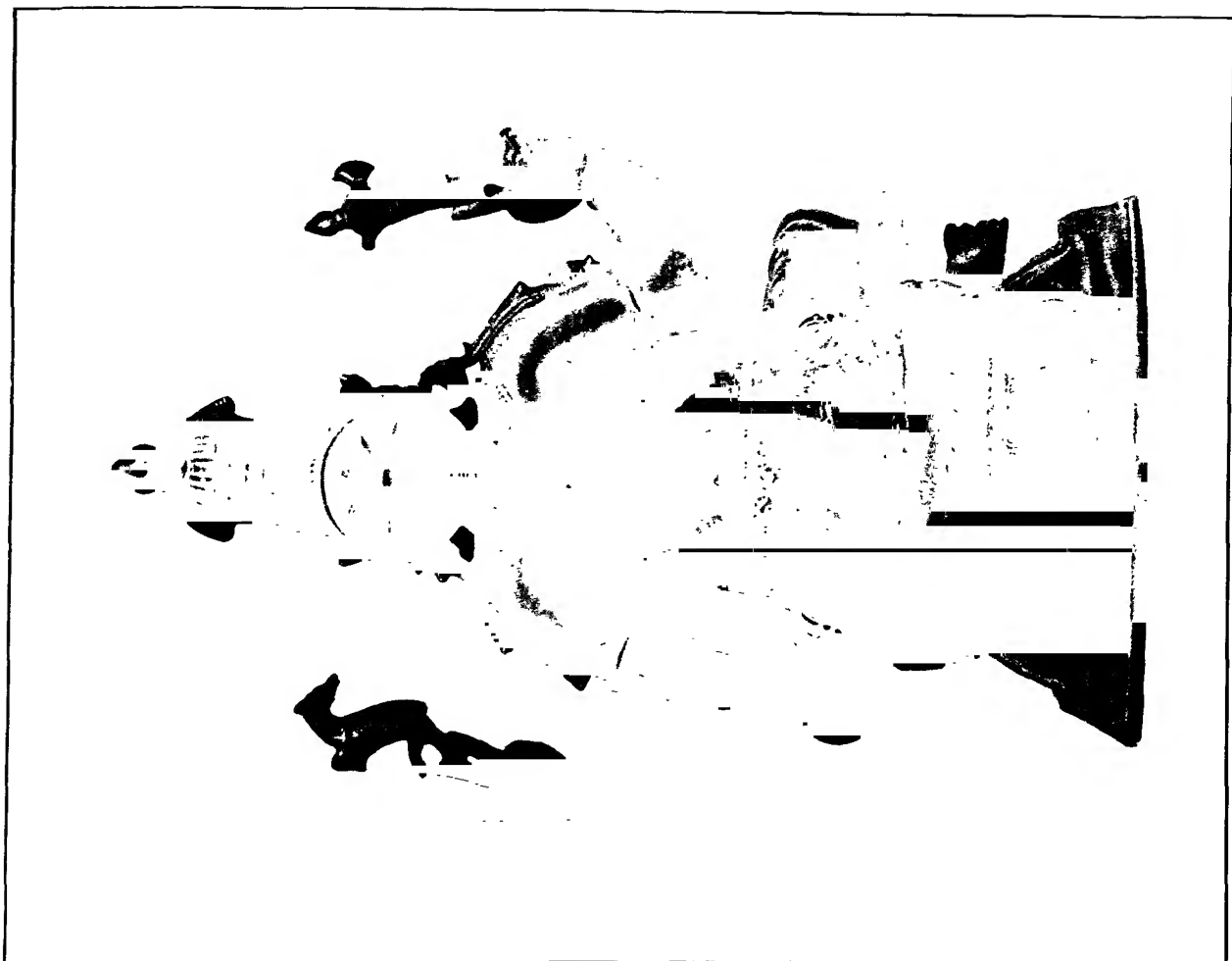
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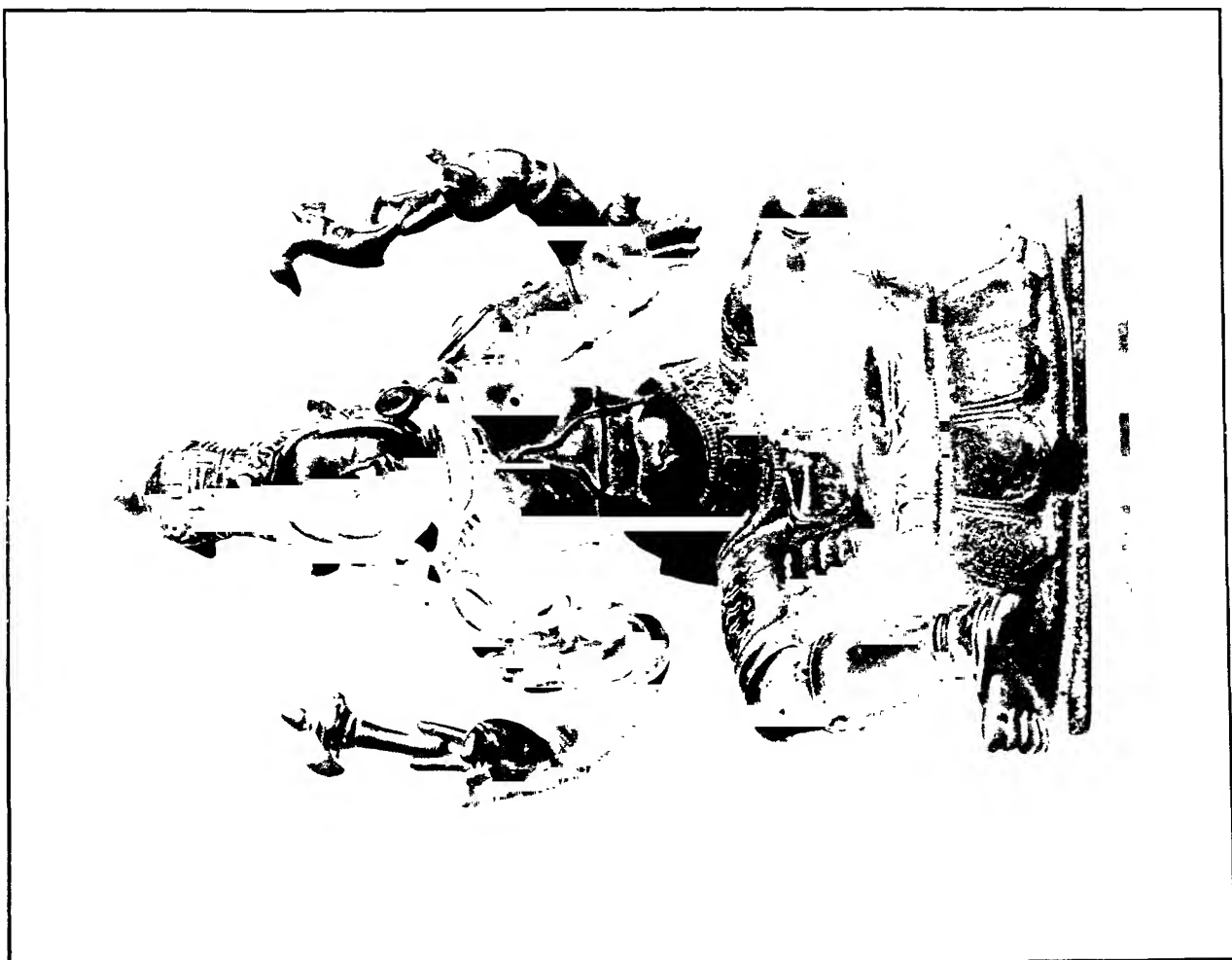
TART AND BUDDHA IN BRASS FROM SRIVASTHI.

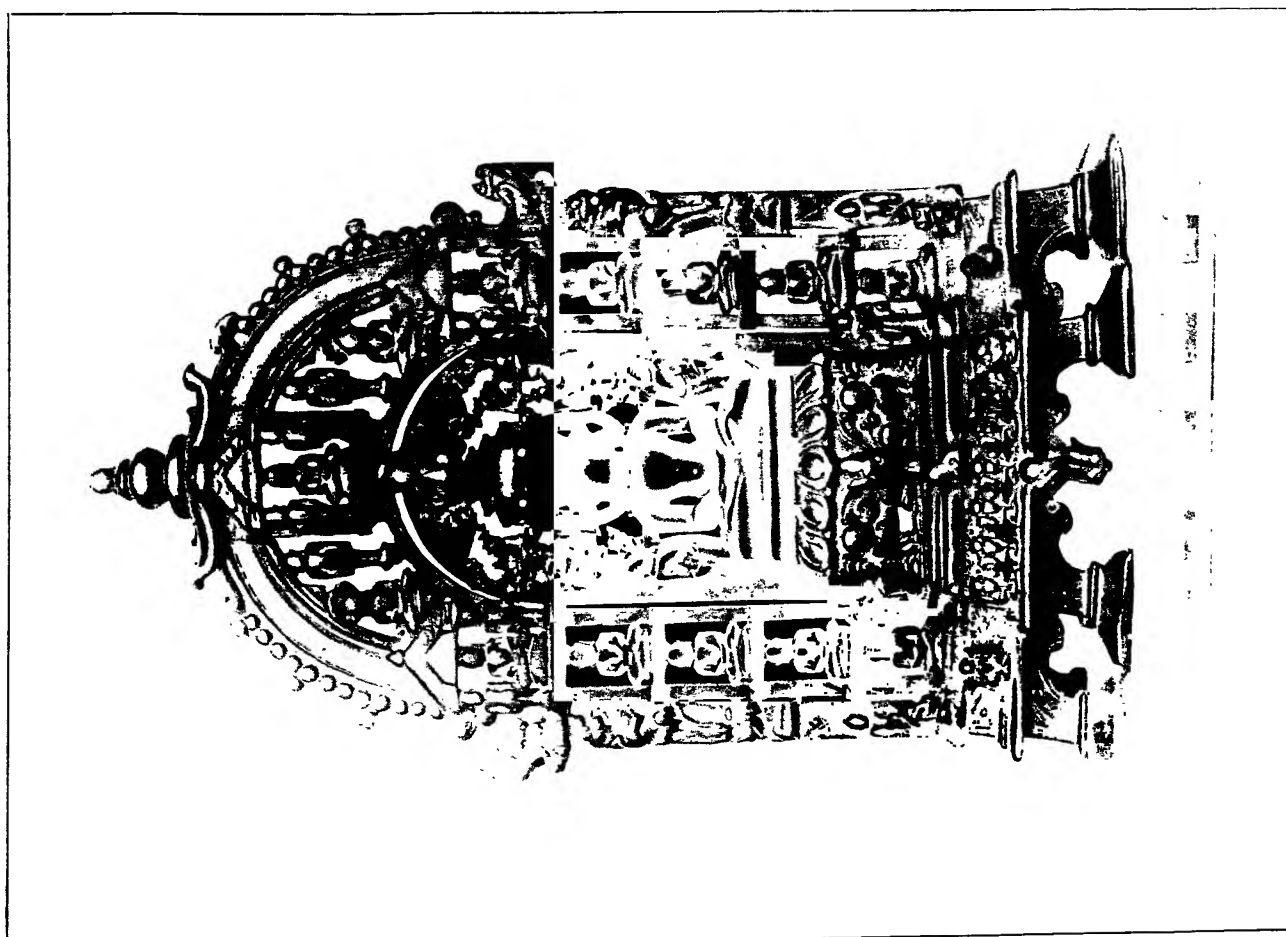
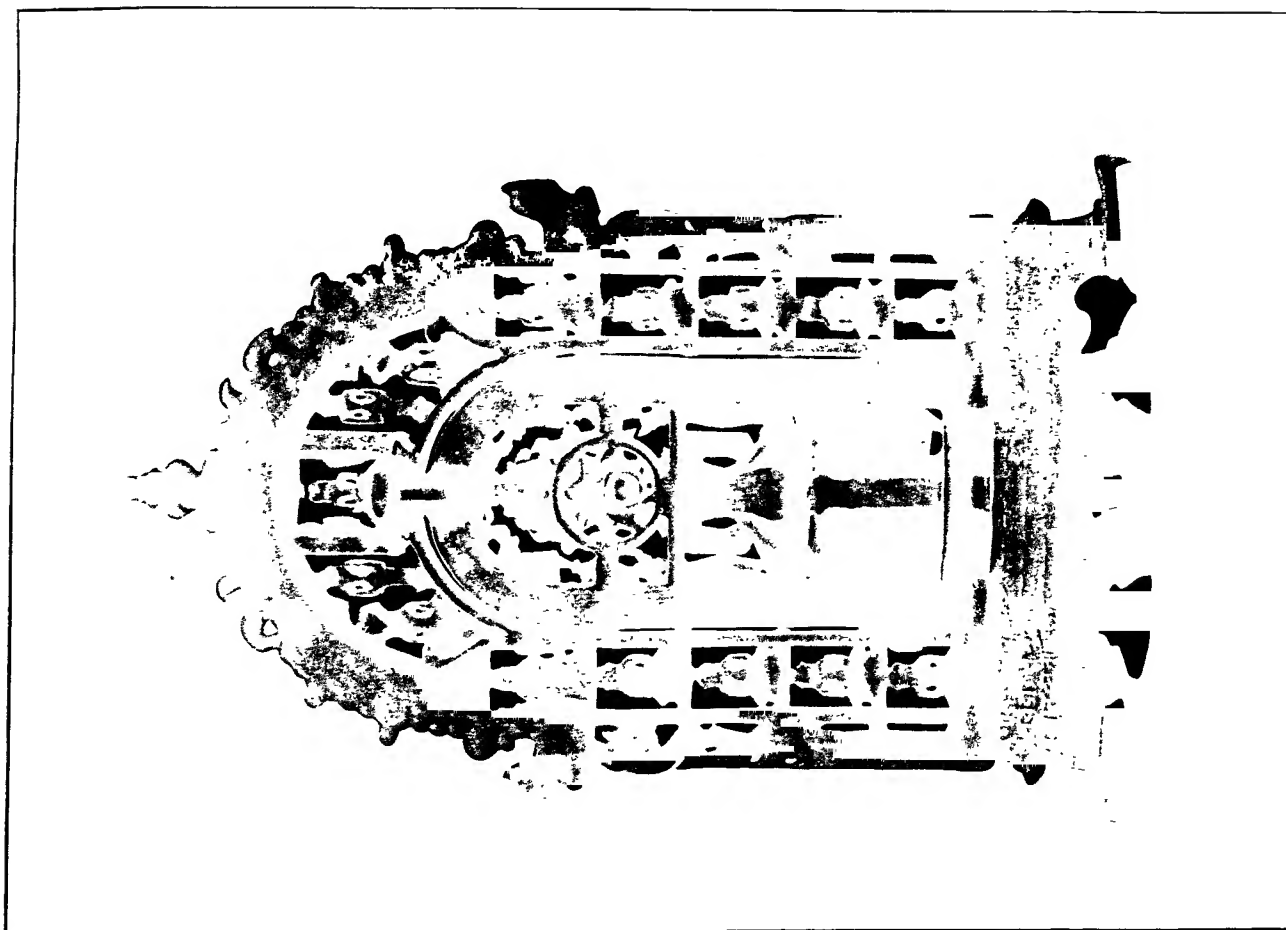


VARAHA FROM DUDHAL DISTRICT LALITPUR.



METAL FIGURE OF ŚIVA FROM BENARES.





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